

Event Calendar



For Immediate Release:

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Celebrate the anniversary of the discovery of gold in Columbia with an evening of excitement!

Columbia's 160th Birthday Party

Come celebrate the discovery of gold 160 years ago with exciting daytime and evening events being held at Columbia State Historic Park on Saturday, March 27.

During the day, from 12-4 p.m. there will be a live reenactment of the discovery of gold, a speech on the museum steps, birthday cake, and venues open throughout town staffed with costumed docents. Learn about Columbia's history by going on a tour of the town. Participation is free.

In the evening, starting at 6:30 p.m., join the Friends of Columbia State Historic Park as we revel in an old fashioned evening birthday party. Although gold was discovered years ago, the town of Columbia is as lively as ever and is ready to make some noise! Like many mining towns, Columbia had a sizeable population of Chinese, French, Irish, Italian, German and Jewish miners and merchants who contributed to the growing cultural and ethnic diversity of Columbia. So, this year's evening party is sure to be a fun one as the Black Irish Band headlines the celebration, followed by special guests the Sonora Poi Dancers. Historic gambling lessons will be offered by the Columbia State Historic Park docents who will give an old-time Spanish fandango feel to the event. Additional birthday party games and surprises will be revealed that evening.

Gold was discovered in Columbia on March 27, 1850. A group of prospectors – Dr. Thaddeus Hildreth, his brother George, John Walker and others – were caught in a rainstorm. While drying out their gear, Walker decided to try his luck in the nearby gulch. Within six weeks his findings attracted thousands of miners. Their crowded camp of log cabins and canvas tents, known as Hildreth's Diggings, was formally renamed Columbia on April 29, 1850.

Tickets for the evening celebration are \$15 general admission and \$10 for Friends of Columbia State Historic Park members and the Columbia State Historic Park docents. To purchase tickets, please contact Bob Lippert at (209) 533-4117.

All proceeds will benefit Friends of Columbia State Historic Park to support interpretation and education programs at Columbia State Historic Park. Throughout the year, the park hosts thousands of schoolchildren who visit during their field trips to explore California's history. The park also plans special events with the donated funds, including Diggings Tent Town 1852, Back to School Night 1861 and many others. Learn more about Columbia State Historic Park by visiting <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/552/files/columbia2.pdf> and <http://www.friendsofcolumbiashp.org/>

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